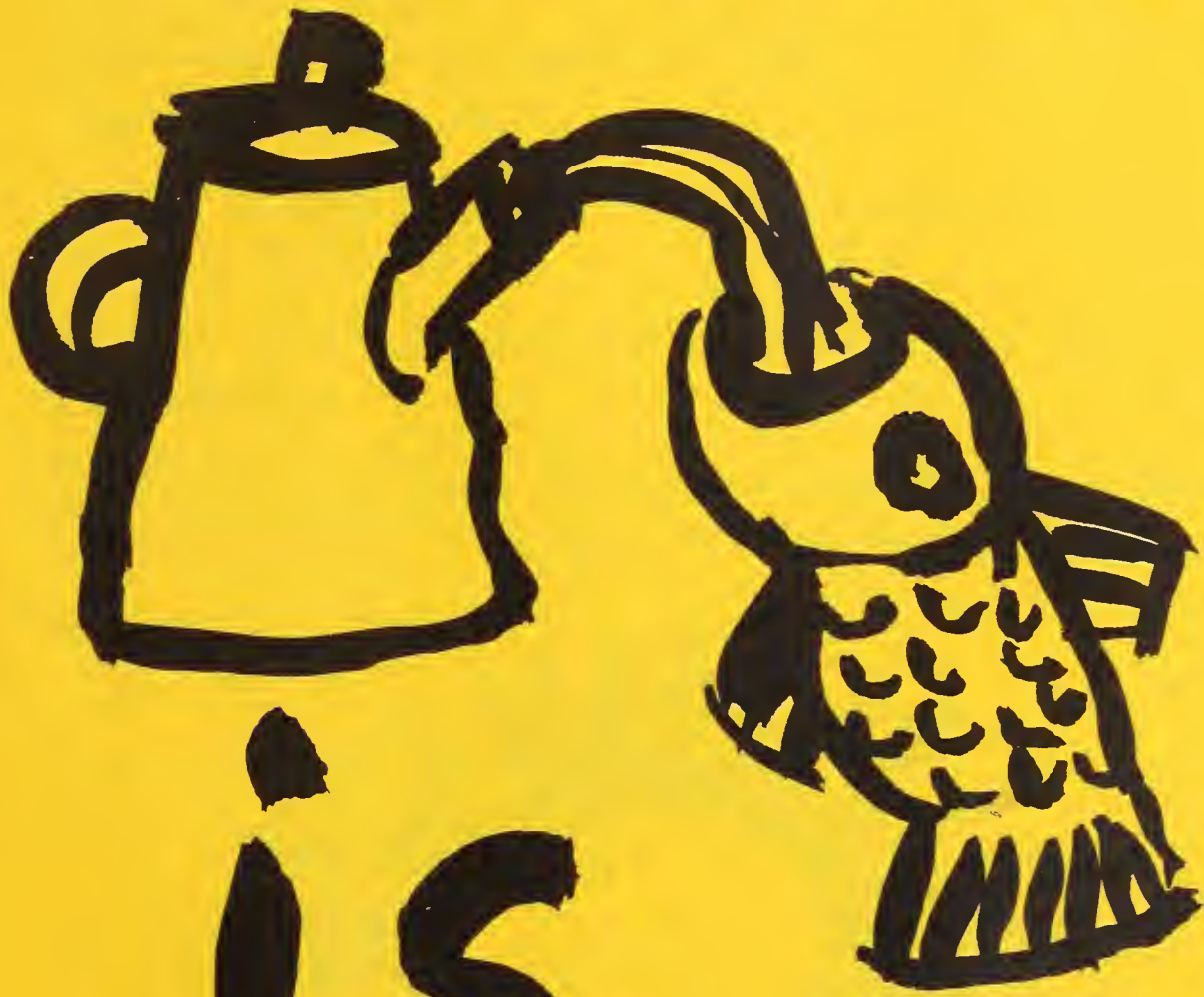


BREAD & PUPPET

WHAT



is

CHEAP
ART?



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WHAT IS CHEAP ART?

- 1) Bad art; cheap in the sense of: sloppy, unsightly, unframed, unmatted; non-valuable art, because of slap-dash execution with poor materials; ephemeral art with no eternal ambitions.
- 2) Blatant art, political art, sloganeering art.
- 3) Irrelevant and un-esoteric art dealing with disrespectful and dumb subject matters.
- 4) Irreverent and uncivil art, as far as self-indulgent and self-obsessed humanity is concerned; also: animalistic art, cow-art, tiger-art, as opposed to decent human art (for-gods-only art).
- 5) Normal commonplace total cliché-art, representing reality artlessly.
- 6) Glossy, pretty, and shiny art--to promote brightness.
- 7) Art against Mobil and other smartarse artpromoters and generally against the business of art.



CHEAP ART COMPREHENSIVE VISION SHOPS AND EXHIBITS

During the last six years (starting about 1980) Bread and Puppet has produced several hundred pounds of art-work on cardboard, masonite, wood, newspaper, newsprint, and fabric that has been offered to the general public for popular prices, ranging from 10¢ to \$20.

The Cheap Art exhibits and sales are not considered a sideline secondary to theater work, but originate in the same conviction which started Bread and Puppet in the early '60s in New York City: art is bread, art must be accessible like bread, and--just as the



degenerate tastebuds of the fluffy white-bread-eaters (who inherited that dessert-like stuff which fattened Louis XVI from the French Revolution) must be challenged with rough old sourdough rye, crusted with the smell of pine and cedar coals which bake it--so the elitist art consumer must be provoked and the educated misconception of art as a privelege of the overfed, emotionally disturbed, a-political members of interior-decorators' clubs must be challenged--not in order to persuade them to a new cause but in order to start off new art-eaters with the right ingredients.

On behalf of these truths and in the spirit of Kurt Schwitters's Merz-manifesto (...wir fordern die sofortige Beseitigung aller Uebelstaende...), Bread and Puppet has organized numerous exhibits and shops to provide practical cures for the ills of the deceived art-consumer as well as the no-art consumer and as an answer to the unabashedly money-obsessed Zeitgeist.

In 1980 we loaded our bus with a hundred or so cookie-size mass-produced pictures of household objects, clouds, hills, and fiddling and raking washerwomen and drove it into neighboring Vermont villages, collected a summons for unauthorized salesmanship in Montpelier, and distributed original paintbrush products to uninhibited grown-ups and kids. Since then we've rented storefronts and tablespaces in country fairs, or had them loaned to us in New York City.

The latest occasion for fresh and cheap art mass-production was a five-day workshop at Johnson State College, Vermont, in February, 1986, where for the first time a catalogue of major categories of possible purposes which art might serve was created, providing our clientele with the opportunity to purchase original anonymous paintings, not simply by following the unreliable preferences of individual taste, but by choosing a type of life-assistance which art dares to offer and which the catalogue suggests as a guideline.

The following categories were listed and stamped on each painting:

- 1) cure for heartaches
- 2) escape from reality
- 3) courage for going to the dentist
- 4) spring-weather protection
- 5) soothing for stomach-ache
- 6) protection from evil landlord
- 7) talisman for airplane-travel
- 8) charm for exams
- 9) amulet against blues
- 10) help getting up on Monday mornings
- 11) consolation for pet-death in the family
- 12) hunger-thirst-appetite-distractor
- 13) nightmare reduction
- 14) salvation from Reagan
- 15) salvation from other political disasters
- 16) flat-tire and engine-failure comfort
- 17) ex voto





Bread & Puppet
Glover VT 05839
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